

Message Text

PAGE 01 NATO 02429 01 OF 02 011317Z

53

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 USNATO 2429

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TAGS: PFOR, NATO, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET CONCEPT OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE

REF: A. USNATO 2189

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1. MISSION HAS RECEIVED INFORMALLY ADVANCE COPY OF IS PAPER ON SOVIET CONCEPT OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE WHICH POLADS WILL DISCUSS AT MAY 6 MEETING. ACTION: DEPARTMENT COMMENTS, IF POSSIBLE, IN TIME FOR MAY 6 POLADS.

BEGIN TEXT:

SOVIET CONCEPT OF "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE"

1. THE JOINING STATEMENT ISSUED AT THE END OF PRIME MINISTER WILSON'S VISIT TO MOSCOW ON 17TH FEBRUARY 1975 (AS WELL AS THE ANGLO-SOVIET PROTOCOL ON CONSULTATIONS) CONTAINED THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH:

"THE TWO SIDES DECLARED THEIR ADHERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLE OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE, WHICH MEANS LONG-TERM, FRUITFUL AND MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL CO-OPERATION BETWEEN
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PAGE 02 NATO 02429 01 OF 02 011317Z

STATES, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS, ON THE BASIS OF FULL EQUALITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT."

SUCH A FORMULATION--WHICH APPEARS FOR THE SECOND TIME IN AN EAST-WEST DOCUMENT--SEEMS TO BE A NEW PRESENTATION OF AN IDEOLOGICAL CONCEPT WHICH HAS FOR MANY YEARS BEEN UNACCEPTABLE TO MOST WESTERN GOVERNMENTS AS A BASIS FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS BECAUSE OF ITS DEFINITION BY THE SOVIET SIDE.

TRADITIONAL SOVIET INTERPRETATION

2. THIS TRADITIONAL INTERPRETATION FITS INTO THE OVERALL IDEOLOGY AND DIALECTIC OF COMMUNISM WHICH REGARDS THE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM OVER CAPITALISM AS INEVITABLE. THE PRINCIPLE OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IS THEREFORE OF A DYNAMIC NATURE, AIMED AT RE-SHAPING INTER-STATE RELATIONS.

3. THE CONCEPT OF A STATIC RELATIONSHIP, WHETHER BETWEEN CLASSES OR COUNTRIES, IS FOREIGN TO COMMUNIST THINKING. MARXIST-LENINIST IDEOLOGY POSTULATES A CONTINUING, INEVITABLE AND EVENTUALLY SUCCESSFUL STRUGGLE OF THE WORKING CLASSES AGAINST THE BOURGEOISIE AND BY EXTENSION OF THE "SOCIALIST" STATES AGAINST THE CAPITALIST WEST. YET FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION, THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP HAVE HAD TO FACE THE FACT OF THE CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF CAPITALIST COUNTRIES HAD THE FUTILITY OF TRYING TO DESTROY THEM BY WAR. THE DOCTRINE OF "PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE" RESOLVES THIS CONTRADICTION; USED BY SOVIET LEADERS SINCE THE EARLY 1920'S IT HAS BEEN ELEVATED IN 1956 FROM A CONVENIENT HISTORICAL INTERLUDE INTO A STATE OF INDEFINITE DURATION. THIS VIEW BECAME AND HAS SINCE REMAINED THE DOCTRINAL BASIS OF SOVIET POLICY TOWARDS WESTERN STATES. "PEACEFUL CO-EXISTENCE" IS THUS PEACEFUL ONLY IN THE SENSE THAT IT EXCLUDES ACTUAL GLOBAL HOSTILITIES, AND COEXISTENCE ONLY UNTIL WHAT BREZHNEV HAS CALLED "THE TOTAL TRIUMPH OF SOCIALISM THROUGHOUT THE WORLD" OVER CAPITALISM. DURING THIS PERIOD OTHER FORMS OF STRUGGLE (POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, IDEOLOGICAL AND LOCAL WARS) ARE NOT EXCLUDED AND, ACCORDING TO SOME AUTHORITIES INCLUDING BREZHNEV HIMSELF, MUST ACTUALLY BE INTENSIFIED. "PEACEFUL
CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NATO 02429 01 OF 02 011317Z

COEXISTENCE APPEARS AS A DIALECTICAL PHENOMENON WHICH CONTAINS ELEMENTS BOTH OF CO-OPERATION AND OF STRUGGLE..... IT IS ABOVE ALL A SPECIFIC FORM OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA." IT IS NOTEWORTHY THAT SOVIET LEADERS RECOMMEND SOVIET-FINNISH RELATIONS AS A MODEL OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE.

4. A FURTHER DIFFICULTY FOR WESTERN COUNTRIES IN THE TRADITIONAL SOVIET DEFINITION OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE HAS LAIN IN ITS APPLICATION ONLY TO RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES OF DIFFERENT SOCIAL SYSTEM. INSIDE THE COMMUNIST CAMP "PROLETARIAN" OR "SOCIALIST" INTERNATIONALISM STILL TAKES PRIORITY OVER "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE". THE "CLASS" CHARACTER OF INTRA-COMMUNIST RELATIONS DICTATES THAT NATIONAL INTERESTS OF COMMUNIST STATES BE SUB-

ORDINATED TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST CAUSE, AND THAT THE TRANSITION FROM CAPITALISM TO SOCIALISM, ONCE MADE, IS IRREVERSIBLE.

5. THE DOCTRINE PURPORTS TO REWRITE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AND TO APPLY THEM IN A DISCRIMINATORY WAY ACCORDING TO THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEM OF THE COUNTRY IN QUESTION.

REAL MEANING OF THE NEW FORMULATION

6. IN THEORY, THE WORDING ADOPTED IN THE ANGLO-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE HAS BEEN GIVEN TWO DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS.

7. FOR SOME DELEGATIONS, THE NEW WORDING CONTAINS ENTIRELY DIFFERENT IMPLICATIONS FROM THE TRADITIONAL DEFINITIONS SINCE IT EQUATES "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" WITH CO-OPERATION RATHER THAN MERELY THE AVOIDANCE OF GLOBAL WAR; IT REFERS TO "FULL

EQUALITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT" WHICH IS HARDLY COMPATIBLE WITH CONTINUED IDEOLOGICAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC STRUGGLE; MORE-OVER THIS VERSION APPLIES "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" TO "STATES, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS", WHICH DOES NOT RULE OUT ITS APPLICATION AMONG THE SOCIALIST STATES.

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NATO 02429 02 OF 02 011332Z

53
ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 USNATO 2429

8. FOR OTHER DELEGATIONS, THERE IS NOTHING NEW FOR THE SOVIETS IN EQUATING THE IDEA OF COEXISTENCE WITH THAT OF CO-OPERATION. THE FAILURE TO MENTION IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY FORM OF CONCESSION. THE SOVIETS HAVE NEVER ATTEMPTED TO INDUCE THE WEST TO ACCEPT THIS IDEA. IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING THAT THE KREMLIN WILL NEVERTHELESS CONTINUE TO STATE THAT ITS POLICY TOWARDS THE WEST IS NOT INCONSISTENT WITH THE CONTINUATION OF THE IDEOLOG-

ICAL STRUGGLE AND ITS CONTROL OVER OTHER SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. IT WOULD BE UNWISE TO IMPLY ANY FORMAL WESTERN APPROVAL FOR THIS APPROACH. THESE DELEGATIONS PREFER THE CONCEPT OF DETENTE, AGREEMENT AND CO-OPERATION, WHICH ARE COMPLEMENTARY TO THE AMBIGUOUS CONCEPT OF "COEXISTENCE". IT IS NOT ONLY A QUESTION OF MAINTAINING THE PRESENT BALANCE OF FORCES, BUT OF ENDING THE SITUATION WHICH DIVIDES THE WORLD INTO TWO HOSTILE SYSTEMS, WHILE ENCOURAGING THE DEVELOPMENT OF RULES TO GOVERN EAST-WEST RELATIONS AND EXCHANGES OF ALL KINDS BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES. IN THIS RESPECT, BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN EAST AND WEST REMAIN OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE.

9. IN PRACTICE, IT WOULD BE OPTIMISTIC TO HOPE THAT THE NEW FORMULATION WILL REPLACE THE TRADITIONAL VERSION IN FUTURE SOVIET STATEMENTS; NOR IS IT LIKELY TO AFFECT SIGNIFICANTLY SOVIET INTERNATIONAL BEHAVIOUR IN PRACTICE. THE SOVIETS HAVE IN FACT MADE PERSISTENT EFFORTS TO GET "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE" CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NATO 02429 02 OF 02 011332Z

ENDORSED AS A PRINCIPLE OF INTERNATIONAL LAW; BUT, IN PROMOTING THE CONCEPT INTERNATIONALLY, THEY HAVE ALWAYS BEEN CAREFUL TO SUPPRESS ITS IDEOLOGICAL OVERTONES AND TO IDENTIFY IT EXCLUSIVELY WITH PRINCIPLES IN LINE WITH WESTERN IDEAS OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.

10. HOWEVER, THERE HAVE RECENTLY BEEN SEVERAL CASES WHERE THE SOVIET PRESENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL EVENTS HAS TAKEN ON A MORE AGGRESSIVE TONE AND SEEMED TO BE DETERMINED MORE BY IDEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS THAN BY A DESIRE FOR POLITICAL CO-OPERATION WITH THE WEST.

11. IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE 11TH CONGRESS OF THE HUNGARIAN COMMUNIST PARTY ON MARCH 16TH, BREZHNEV TOOK THE OCCASION TO RESTATE THE SOVIET VIEW OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE IN TERMS CLOSER TO TRADITIONAL PRE-WILSON VISIT FORMULATIONS, REEMPHASISING THE ELEMENT OF IDEOLOGICAL CONFLICT, WHICH MR BREZHNEV HAD PLAYED DOWN IN HIS SPEECH TO MR. WILSON, AND MAKING IT CLEAR THAT THE PRINCIPLES OF COEXISTENCE ONLY APPLIED BETWEEN STATES WITH DIFFERING SOCIAL SYSTEMS AND THEREFORE NOT BETWEEN THE SOCIALIST STATES. IT SEEMS POSSIBLE THAT BREZHNEV HAD TO DO SO BECAUSE OF THE RESULTS OF THE PRAGUE MEETING ON MARCH 4TH AND 5TH OF CENTRAL COMMITTEE IDEOLOGICAL SECRETARIES OF RULING COMMUNIST PARTIES: AT PRAGUE THE USSR MAY HAVE ENCOUNTERED, ON THE ONE HAND, CONCERN THAT DURING THE WILSON VISIT IT HAD WEAKENED TOO MUCH THE ELEMENT OF IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE IN THE DOCTRINE OF PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE AND, ON THE OTHER, ATTEMPTS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE ANGLO-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE TO UNDERMINE THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE.

12. ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF THIS TREND IS THE ASSESSMENT IN "PRAVDA" ON 8TH APRIL OF THE RESULTS OF THE "PEACE PROGRAMME" ADOPTED FOUR YEARS AGO BY THE 24TH PARTY CONGRESS: THE

LINK BETWEEN THE SOVIET CONCEPT OF DETENTE AND THE ACTIVITIES
OF THE COMMUNIST MOVEMENT IN THE WEST HAS HARDLY EVER
BEFORE BEEN MADE SO CLEAR.

CONCLUSION

13. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF COMMUNIST IDEOLOGY THERE
IS A DIALECTICAL INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN THE PRINCIPLES OF
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PAGE 03 NATO 02429 02 OF 02 011332Z

"PROLETARIAN INTERNATIONALISM" AND OF "PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE".

RECENT SOVIET STATEMENTS ON BOTH PRINCIPLES REFLECT
IN NO WAY A CHANGE IN DOCTRINE. IT WOULD BE POLITICALLY IMPOS-
SIBLE FOR SOVIET LEADERS SIMPLY TO DISREGARD EITHER ONE OF THEM,
BEING MAJOR COMPONENTS OF THEIR IDEOLOGY, JUST TO MEET THE
INTEREST OF THE SOVIET STATE IN DETENTE.

IN SOVIET MINDS PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE REMAINS AN EX-
PRESSION OF DIALECTIC MOMENTUM, OF NECESSITY FOR STRUGGLE AND
FOR THE EXPLOITATION OF WEAKNESS OR DIVISION IN THE NON-COMMUNIST
WORLD. THE LATTER IS THE PRODUCT OF A BROAD ACCEPTANCE OF THE
MARXIST VIEW ON THE WORLD AND, MORE SPECIFICALLY OF THE BOL-
SHEVIK EXPERIENCE.

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